

Exploring Adak

ATVs are a great way to get around Adak's road system, and useful for hunters hauling meat out, *where ATVs are allowed, and when conditions are good.*

It's Not Always Easier to Drive...

Trails on Adak are treacherously steep in places. Riders regularly roll their machines on sidehills. When trails are slick or boggy, be prepared to park your ATV and continue on foot. People who forge ahead despite conditions often end up getting stuck and hiking anyway, and have a mired vehicle to deal with.



Damaged Trails

Adak's wet climate and fragile tundra are not ideal conditions for ATVs. Trails deteriorate quickly and are impassable in places. Drivers trying to avoid deep ruts and mud holes make new trails, expanding damaged areas. What for decades were scenic hiking routes are now slippery mud wallows, difficult to drive and unpleasant for other users.



Things to Think About

The ATV damage you see today happened in a very short period of time.

Since the Navy did not allow ATVs, none were on the island prior to about 2001. The damage you see has all occurred since then.

ATVs cause more damage to Alaska wildlands than any other human use.

Fragile ecosystems and fish and wildlife habitat are extensively altered. Even low levels of use abrade soils, compress and shear vegetation, and cause erosion of fertile top soils limiting the opportunity for rehabilitation. Soil erosion into streams and wetlands increases water temperature, reduces oxygen content and smothers gravel fish spawning beds. ATV stream crossings wear away banks widening the streambeds, which creates shallow spots that interfere with fish passage and freeze up faster in the fall.

Damage done today with an ATV may not be repairable in your lifetime.

Cold wet tundra soils and tundra plants recover slowly. Dry lichens are so fragile that a single pass of an ATV will virtually eliminate them. Lichens are important caribou food.

Stay on the trail, and park it when conditions are bad.

Think about what you are doing to the land, and be responsible.



Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge

Aleutian Islands Unit - Adak, Alaska

ATVs on ADAK

How to tell where you are
and where your ATV
shouldn't be



Land Ownership

Most of the land near town is private and belongs to the Aleut Corporation (TAC). Access to TAC land requires a Land Use Permit, available at the airport when flights come in and from Aleut Real Estate (592-ADAK, in the General Store building). ATV use on TAC land was in the past restricted to improved roads and Federal 17b Trail Easements. TAC's ATV policy is currently under review; contact them for more information (561-4300).

Green areas on the map at right are part of the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, where hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, hiking and exploring are encouraged and do not require permits. ATVs, however, are not allowed anywhere on the Refuge. Please park your ATV and walk in.

About Easements

Federal 17b Trail Easements provide access across TAC property to Refuge lands and public waters. Easements are open to foot and ATV traffic, but only two trails--Husky Pass and Shagak Bay--are actually suitable for ATVs. Trail damage has resulted in alternate routes extending far beyond the 25' easement width onto TAC land.

Know Where You Are, and Where Your ATV Shouldn't Be

Several trespass ATV trails have developed in and around Mt. Reed, and these can lead you unwittingly into the Refuge. The ATV trail that begins at Heart Lake goes directly to the Refuge, then circles Mt. Reed in and out of the Refuge. It is your responsibility to keep your ATV out of the Refuge, as you could be cited and fined. Unfortunately, there may not always be signs marking the Refuge boundary.

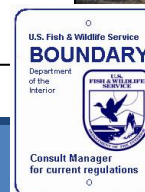
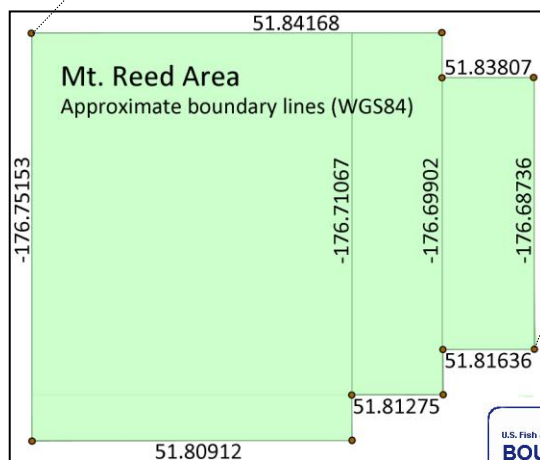
You can keep out of trouble by loading the Refuge boundary shape files onto your GPS. The files are available from the Refuge's Adak office (592-2406), Aleut Real Estate's Adak office (592-ADAK), and online at <<http://alaskamaritime.fws.gov/visitors-educators/caribhunting/adak.htm>>. You can approximate the Refuge boundary line using the latitude and longitude on the map at right. For example, if you are between 176.69902 and 176.75153, then you should be either north of 51.84168 or south of 51.80912 to avoid trespassing on the Refuge.

Respect the Land, and the Law

Check with TAC about current policy before taking an ATV on their land.

Park it and hike when conditions are bad, even where ATVs are allowed. Don't widen or degrade trails.

Never drive on the Refuge. Help preserve America's wild lands for future generations of visitors and wildlife.



DO NOT TAKE ATVs INTO THE REFUGE